



West Heslerton CE Religious Education Policy

This policy has been written taking into account the latest Church of England Statement for Entitlement guidance (2019) and the SIAMS Evaluation Schedule (2023).

Religious education should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together. Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person. (Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019)

This allows us to explicitly teach RE as an academic subject that is non confessional to support our school's Christian vision:

"Children are at the centre of all we do"

We encourage everyone in our school community to live life well reflecting Christian attitudes and values and working in partnership with families as part of a wider, caring community.

The hallmarks of a Christian life lived well are shown in the fruits of the Spirit – But the fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control. Against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22 – 23

This policy has been adopted by the Governors in consultation with the Head teacher, RE subject leader and teaching staff. It was approved by governors on 21st November 2024 and will be reviewed every 3 years alongside the Learning, Teaching and Curriculum Policy.

Introduction

At West Heslerton CE school, pupils and their families can expect a high quality religious education (RE) curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths and world views. As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is at the heart of our RE curriculum. We use the Diocese of York and Leeds Locally Agreed RE Syllabus, adapted for our setting. The use of an enquiry approach engages with significant theological concepts and the pupil's own understanding of the world as part of their wider religious literacy. Links with our school vision, and support for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RE curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and world views studied.

Aims and objectives

As stated in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, our school aims for all pupils:

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.



Curriculum for Religious Education

RE is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for senior leaders, who ensure that the teaching, learning and resourcing of RE is comparable with core curriculum subjects.

This means that the RE curriculum:

- is intrinsic to the working of our distinctive Christian vision in allowing all pupils to flourish. It contributes to British values and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- is delivered objectively to make sense to all pupils and allow them to engage and be challenged to explore core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue through the encounter of a diverse range of religious and non-religious worldviews.
- is delivered objectively to engage and challenge all pupils to explore core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religious and non-religious worldviews.
- reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and human science, to enable pupils to develop their religious literacy. (*Religious Literacy helps children and young people hold balanced and well informed conversations about religion and belief.*) ([Key Principles of a balanced curriculum in RE.](#))
- enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas as well as core concepts from other religious and non-religious worldviews.
- provides opportunities for pupils to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religious and non-religious worldviews.
- supports the development of other curriculum areas and other general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs.
- encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and pupil grouping as appropriate to pupils' needs
- offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all pupils, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it.
- encourages pupils' personal development and applying their learning to living
- ensures that all pupils' contributions are valued in RE as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs/worldviews

Curriculum balance and time

Reflecting the school's trust deed, parents and pupils are entitled to expect that, in Church schools, Christianity should be the majority religion studied in each year group and should be at least 50% of curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicitly RE objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RE. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in key stages 1-4.

Time Allocation.

It is recommended that RE is taught for a minimum of 36 hours per year at Key Stage One, and 45 hours per year at Key Stage Two. (this reflects 5% see above)

The time allocated for teaching RE at West Heslerton CE Primary School is:

EYFS	planned within the EYFS Framework
KS1	normally 1 hour per week to include visits
KS2	normally 1 hour per week plus additional visits

(Schools must take note that the RE entitlement is totally separate from requirements for collective worship. Collective worship must not be considered curriculum time for RE or the teaching of RE.)



Scheme of Work

Locally Agreed Syllabus Schemes of work have been used to create Curriculum Documents for each RE unit that are appropriate for our setting.

Following the agreed syllabus requires that all pupils study Christianity in each stage. In addition, pupils will study the principal religions represented in the UK, in line with the law. Furthermore, children from families where non-religious worldviews are held are represented in almost all our classrooms. Non-religious worldviews, including 'organised' examples such as Humanism, will also be studied.

EYFS	Children will encounter Christians and people of other faiths and non-religious worldviews, as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it.
KS1	Christians Muslims / Jewish people
Lower KS2	Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Jewish people and Humanists
Upper KS2	Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Jewish people, Humanists and those with other religious/non-religious worldviews

Teaching and learning

We recognise the importance of teaching RE in a creative, knowledge-rich, broad and balanced way. Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all pupils, so that they develop a wide range of skills including enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religious and non-religious worldviews. RE lessons provide a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging.

Pupils experience opportunities to learn and express themselves through an enquiry-based style of learning by:

- Posing and discussing 'big' and challenging questions
- Reading and critically analysing texts.
- Interpreting information from different sources.
- Researching information for themselves in libraries and on computers.
- Listening to and discussing with the teacher and other pupils.
- Engaging in pair and group work.
- Exploring a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama.
- Experiencing visits and visitors.
- Taking part in outdoor learning.
- Taking time for reflection.
- Having opportunities to embed learning into the long-term memory

Teaching in RE challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, gender and religion. Lessons seek to present religious and non-religious worldviews in all their richness and diversity in terms of beliefs, traditions, customs and lifestyle in a sensitive and accurate way in order to encourage a positive attitude towards diversity. Questions, views, and opinions are treated with sensitivity and respect.

Teaching enables pupils to gain something of personal value from their study of religious belief and practice, for example, the way that they might apply insights gained from religious stories to their own lives.



Cross-curricular links

Cross curricular work is encouraged, in line with whole school policy on teaching and learning. Religious education supports the development of general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RE also makes a major contribution to pupils' SMSC development. It addresses issues which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, art, drama and history, geography, computing, music as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship.

Visits and visitors

We are able to visit places of worship in our region, where faith leaders and other members of the community are willing to meet with children and be involved in the teaching of RE. We aim to use this valuable resource for all classes. All pupils have the opportunity to visit a place of worship and participate in the visit of a representative to their RE class.

Children will have the opportunity to make visits during their time at our school that support the units of work in the school's long term plan. The RE subject leader supports class teachers to organise these educational visits. Virtual visits/visitors may also be used to enhance learning.

Health and Safety

Health and safety issues may arise in religious education on a number of occasions for example, when pupils:

- Handle artefacts.
- Consume food.
- Visit places of worship.

Teachers will conform to guidelines in the school's health and safety policy in these circumstances.

Role of the RE subject leader

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils receive their legal entitlement of religious education.
- Ensure RE provision reflects the [Church of England Statement of Entitlement](#).
- Produce and regularly review a subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date.
- Ensure all teachers know what should be taught in religious education, what resources are available, and what standards of attainment are expected at the end of each Key Stage.
- Monitor and review the implementation of policy and units of work.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in RE and pupils' progress and standards.
- Ensure there are rigorous assessment systems in place to enable teachers and pupils to gauge progress and attainment in RE.
- Monitor, analyse and question RE assessments carried out by staff.
- Liaise with the HT and Governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of RE across the school.
- Support colleagues by sharing new ideas and pedagogy, to help develop their subject confidence and expertise through CPD opportunities and support sessions.
- Seek opportunities to share effective practice locally and regionally and engage in professional development for themselves and other staff members.
- Oversee the RE budget and monitor RE resources to ensure they are kept and stored respectfully and replaced where necessary.
- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited into RE lessons.

Matching Work to Pupils' Needs

Our whole school policy regarding pupils with SEND, applies to RE. Teachers should also be alert to the fact that some children have special and deep experience of a religion through family practice. This of course may not relate to their general educational ability.



Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in religious education will:

- Be directly related to the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, adapted for our setting.
- Seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge.
- Recognise the range of skills and attitudes which the subject seeks to develop.
- Employ well defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort, following the school's marking policy.
- Include pupil self-assessment.
- Enable effective tracking of pupil progress to identify areas for development in pupil's knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development.
- Enable effective reporting to parents.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

We intend that this policy should operate for the next 3 years, and then be fully reviewed by all staff and governors. To ensure that our RE policy is in practice, and to help teachers keep track of their own work and needs for support or training, all staff are asked to undertake regular assessments of pupils work and regularly review the implementation of the Long Term plan for RE to ensure all pupils achieve the very best they can in this subject area.

The subject leader's role includes monitoring and evaluation of this policy in practice. We maintain a 'self-evaluation' of our RE work in preparation for any scrutiny.

Self-Evaluation

The subject leader for RE will assess and review the subject's strengths and areas for development. This will be in line with SIAMS and OFSTED guidance about self evaluation and review

Staff training and CPD

All staff have access to RE CPD in line with the subject leader's identified areas for development. This is either 'in house' or through diocesan support. The RE subject leader also attends local network meetings wherever possible.

Resources

We have a wide range of resources, to support our RE teaching, that we continue to develop. Religious education will be funded to enable a range of resources on different religions to be purchased, such as books for teachers, pupils and the library; posters and artefacts. We maintain a well-stocked RE area in the library, which offers many stories from different traditions. The school makes use of guidance material and resources produced by the SACRE / Diocese. Funding will also allow, where possible, visits to different places of worship and provide INSET for staff. All resources will be stored, be easily accessible and kept in good condition. Resource banks will be available for both staff and pupils on all major religions and world views as appropriate. Our staff are given protected time to familiarize themselves with any new materials.

Legal Requirements

Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request (or their own request if aged 18 or over).

(DfE Circular 1 / 94, paragraphs 44 & 49, and Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 page 28) The law relating to Religious Education for pupils who are not yet in key stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the National Curriculum. As Religious Education must be taught to 'all registered pupils at the school', it includes pupils in reception classes, but not those in nursery classes or play groups.

We note the Human Right of parents to withdraw their children from RE. The school must comply with any request from a parent to withdraw their child and parents are not required to give their reasons for



wanting to do so. However, in view of the importance placed on RE as a core subject in a church school, we would hope that all children admitted will participate fully in RE. We aim to provide an open curriculum which can be taught to all pupils, by all staff.

Teachers are asked to refer to the head teacher any questions from parents about withdrawals. Pupils withdrawn from RE by their parents will be given work to complete in a different class during RE sessions and not participate in RE visits. We ask that anyone wishing to withdraw their child would discuss this with the Headteacher before making this decision.

Requests for full or partial withdrawal from RE should be made in writing to the head teacher and a record kept of them.

Reviewed: Autumn 2024 by FGB

Date of next review: Summer 2026

